

I Don't Want to Go Home by [mariewings493](#)

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Summary: Steve notices Billy's bruises during gym class, and Steve lets Billy stay over his house for the night. Warnings: contains violent language (including homophobic slurs) and mention of child abuse.

I Don't Want to Go Home

I Don't Want to Go Home - A Harringrove fan fiction

A fluffy comfort ficlet

Warnings: mention of child abuse and homophobic slurs and other harsh language

In the boys' locker room at Hawkins High, Steve Harrington was getting dressed. Gym was his last class of the day, so once he put his clothes back on, he could go home. He put his shirt on and then froze. Something was different, he noticed. Billy hadn't bullied him today. In fact, he's been acting invisible ever since Max sedated him and made him promise not to mess with them again. That was about a month ago. Steve glanced over at Billy, who was about to put his shirt back on, and he noticed various bruises all over him. Come to think of it, Steve realized Billy hadn't played basketball shirtless today like he usually does. Was he trying to hide the bruises? Steve shrugged it off, figuring Billy just got into another fight, as troublemakers like him do.

The locker room cleared out, except for the two of them. Steve had brought a lot of stuff with him, including his nailed bat, in case of a demodog attack, but things have been peaceful since the Snow Ball. Nevertheless, he wanted to be sure that he didn't forget to take any of his things back home with him. As he was checking his bag, he felt a tug on the shoulder of his tee-shirt. When he turned around, Billy immediately embraced him. The gesture was firm, but by no means aggressive... which made Steve kind of frightened.

"I don't wanna go home," Billy sighed into Steve's shoulder. His hands gripped onto the slightly taller boy's back.

Steve might not be great at figuring people out, but it was pretty darn obvious that something was wrong. So, without further ado, he offered: "You wanna come over my house?"

The seventeen year old boys drove home in silence. They arrived at Steve's house. Billy could tell they had the house to themselves, since

the driveway was empty and the lights weren't on. It made him feel strangely comforted to know that he didn't have to involve anyone else in his misery.

"Want anything to drink?" Steve asked once they were inside, "I've got coke, apple juice, water..."

"Got any beer?"

Steve smirked. "Yeah, I think so," he said as he rummaged to the back of the fridge, where his dad thought he wouldn't get to it. He brought out two cans and motioned to Billy to take a seat on the couch in the living room. They sat down; a full cushion space between them. Steve sat silently. He didn't want to pry. He figured it would be best to let Billy speak when, or if, he's ready.

"I fucked up," Billy said with a frown, after taking a few sips of beer. Steve's brown eyes looked at him, full of caring. "After our fight, I told myself to stop trying to impress my A-hole father. The brat can take care of herself. I shouldn't have to babysit her 24/7. My dad's gotta realize that sometime. So I gave up tryin' to obey his orders to watch over her and keep her from going out."

"So he hit you?" Steve asked a bit presumptuously.

"No, well, yeah," Billy mumbled, tossing his head from side to side, like the assumption was half true. "He did hit me after that, but that wasn't the worst of it. I'm used to a punch or two. But then..."

Billy froze. His Adam's apple bobbed in a swallowing gesture as his throat was having trouble forming the thoughts in his mind into words. His dark brows bunched together in distress.

"You okay?" Steve asked. He felt an urge to comfort Billy somehow... Place his hand on Billy's to steady him... but he fought it.

"Harrington," Billy addressed Steve for the first time since he had been there, and it made it apparent that Billy wasn't just talking to himself. It wasn't just anyone that he wanted to open up to. It was Steve. He continued, reluctantly. "Have you ever, I dunno, felt like you've been living a lie? Trying to be what others want you to be?"

And one day you just wake up and realize that isn't what you want? It isn't who you are?"

Steve thought of how he was before Nancy broke up with him. He was the king of the school who thought he could get away with anything. He was a bully like Billy, causing trouble for less popular classmates like Jonathan Byers. He was too self absorbed (and perhaps blinded by love) to notice his girlfriend's best friend get killed in his backyard. Too stubborn to try to see things from Nancy's point of view... Too vain to notice she didn't love him.

"Yeah," Steve reflected, "I think I know how you feel. I was too self absorbed to realize how much of a douchebag I was until the girl I loved broke up with me. And then I realized the person I was when I was with her isn't who I'm meant to be... And what about you?"

"I'm gay," Billy said bluntly. Steve's big brown eyes widened. It wasn't the response he was expecting.

Billy continued: "My dad knew. He called me a faggot almost every day. I kept shrugging it off. Kept trying to make him believe he was wrong. So I tried being as... straight as possible... acted more macho, deepened my voice around him, hung up pin-ups of women in bikinis in my room. I even went out with tons of women and fucked 'em... trying to convince even myself that I don't like guys. But yesterday, I'd decided that I had enough. I was done pretending. So I came out to my dad. So he beat me, and beat me... and beat me. Maybe thinkin' that if I get battered around enough, I'll 'come to my senses' and keep being what he wants me to be."

"Shit, Billy, I'm sorry," Steve said. He looked down at the floor, unsure of how to process this. When he looked back up, Billy was crying.

"Fuck," Billy exclaimed, wiping his eyes, "don't look at me! You better not tell anyone at school about this, or I'll rip your-"

Steve put an arm around Billy's shoulder and pulled him close.

Billy's blue eyes opened wide at his brown haired classmate, who was now only a few inches away.

"You can cry on my shoulder if you want," Steve said. It took some coercing, but Billy eventually did just that. He cried for a good hour, as Steve sat in silence, lightly rubbing his denim-sleeved shoulder.

They realized it was getting late, so they decided to call it a night. Billy asked about sleeping arrangements, and Steve replied: "You can sleep in my room, if you want." From that statement, Billy assumed that Steve would be sleeping in his parents' bedroom or the couch, so he was very surprised when Steve stripped off his pants and hopped into bed beside him. Billy's face turned 50 shades of red.

"Whoa, what the hell are you doing?!" Billy roared. He was embarrassed and flustered, but from his voice, Steve assumed he was angry.

"Sorry, man," Steve replied, his face looking dejected, "I just thought you wouldn't want to be alone tonight. You've been through some rough stuff. I thought I could be here to fight away the nightmares, y'know?" As he said that he suddenly pulled out his studded bat from underneath his bedside table. The unexpected sight of the weapon drew a laugh out of Billy. Mission accomplished, Steve thought with smirk. "But I can leave if you want me to," he added.

"Nah, it's fine, amigo," Billy replied, as his smile turned to a look of uncertainty. "I just thought that you'd be, I dunno, uncomfortable with sleeping in the same bed as me."

"Why would I be?"

"It doesn't bother you that I'm gay?" Billy asked in disbelief.

"Why would it?" Steve replied with another question. "Come on, amigo, we've bathed together. I think I can handle laying on the same piece of furniture as you." He got another, smaller laugh from Billy. Score 2!

As the young men fell asleep, they slowly, unconsciously, inched closer to one another... The one longing for a loving embrace that he could never receive at home, and the other possessing a nearly parental desire to protect those around him... by morning they found themselves awoken in each other's warm embrace.